

DRIVING EFFICIENCY WITH SIX SIGMA, LEAN & LEADERSHIP
TRAINING

ABOUT EAGLE OTTAWA, LLC. Eagle Ottawa is the world's largest supplier of leather upholstery for automotive seats, instrument panels, and door panels. Located in Rochester Hills, Michigan, Eagle Ottawa has 165 employees and is part of the Lear Leather Division. Since 1865, the company has demonstrated a passion for leather making in craftsmanship, artistry, and innovation, growing to become the most respected leather manufacturer in the industry.

THE CHALLENGE. The management team at Eagle Ottawa, Lear Leather Division, wanted to create a "Center of Excellence" for its developing workforce to give the company a competitive edge in innovation and technology. For help in realizing this vision, the team reached out to the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (The Center), part of the MEP National Network.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. The Center assisted Eagle Ottawa in building a strong industry lead based on world-class service and standards. First, they advised the company to implement mixed-mode manufacturing, harmonizing several unique manufacturing streams to better meet stringent customer demands. A series of Kaizen improvement events, workshops, and Lean Manufacturing trainings ingrained the new methodology into current processes.

Eagle Ottawa employees not only took the methodology and built upon it, but found ways to lead the change. Over 25 employees attended multiple sessions of The Center's four-day Supervisory Training course. Designed to improve the flow of communication and strengthen the effectiveness of the team, the course focused on time management, motivation, delegation, and conflict resolution. In addition, several Eagle Ottawa associates pursued training to become Certified Green Belts. The Center helped Eagle Ottawa employ Six Sigma to drive out variation, and many of the Green Belts gained promotions within the organization.

With improved processes, Eagle Ottawa generated cost savings and higher sales, and the company added new positions. "As we continue our journey towards a state of operational excellence, it isn't a question of if we are world class," said Tim Reedy, general manager. "It is a statement made through our actions and is strongly represented by our people, processes and products. It is a statement made partly because of our relationship with The Center." The commitment to higher standards and investment in employee skills positions the company for further success.

RESULTS

New sales: **\$3,000,000**Cost savings: **\$750,000**New investment: **\$137,000**Jobs created: **3**

CONTACT US

45501 Helm St.
Plymouth, MI 48170

(734)451-4200

www.the-center.orgMICHIGAN
MANUFACTURING
TECHNOLOGY
CENTER

"It's hard to find enough superlatives to describe our relationship with The Center. The best way to describe it would be that it is a true partnership. In the past four years, we've grown to know their team and have welcomed them as a part of our family. We never would have gotten to where we are without the mutual trust. When we commit to doing our part towards making the workshop, event, or training effective, the momentum is undeniable."

-Tim Reedy, General Manager